

BERKELEY EMERITI TIMES

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EMERITI LUNCH: MARCH 15TH



Severin Borenstein

EXCITING PROGRESS AND HARSH REALITIES IN THE RACE TO LOW-CARBON ENERGY

Improvement in solar and wind generation technologies has accelerated in the last few years.

Biofuels and storage technologies seem to be on the cusp of important breakthroughs. Yet, progress in replacing fossil fuels has been painfully slow. Professor Severin Borenstein will discuss the challenging hurdles that still exist for alternative energy sources in the developed and the developing world, and the variety of policy arguments for government intervention in the market, some valid, many not. He will characterize the public and private activities that he believes will be necessary to address the energy challenges we still face.

Professor Borenstein has deep roots in Berkeley. A graduate of Berkeley High School who completed his B.A. in Economics at Cal before going on to a Ph.D. from MIT, he now holds the E.T. Grether Chair in Business Administration and Public Policy and also serves as the Director of the UC Energy Institute in the Haas Economic Analysis and Policy Group. He joined the Haas School and the Energy Institute in 1996, moving from two years in a joint appointment in those roles while still Professor of Economics at U.C. Davis.

Very early in his career Professor Borenstein found himself moving from a purely theoretical study of economics to a concern with the light that an understanding of economics could bring to matters of public policy.

On completing his undergraduate work at U.C. Berkeley in 1976, he took up a position with the Civil Aeronautics Board, studying the effects of airline deregulation on competition and pricing in the airline industry – an interest he maintains today even as he has moved on to other fields. His Ph.D. work at M.I.T., while in economics, built on this experience and is reflected in his years in a professorship at the University of Michigan in the Department of Economics and the Institute of Public Policy Studies and his work and publications from his years at U.C. Davis.

During the early years of his service as Director of Berkeley's Energy Institute he quickly learned to rely on enlisting a team of highly qualified specialists in technology and engineering to supplement his own expertise in economics and finance. This policy proved itself when the state found itself in a precarious position after the de-regulation of electricity markets in 1998. Wholesale electricity prices went through the roof as the generating companies manipulated the market by cutting back on production to increase their profits. The team at the Energy Institute had predicted accurately what would happen and received high recognition for its contribution to the solution of the state's energy crisis. This recognition extended to further funding of the Institute, with few controls on research topics.

Since about 2000 Professor Borenstein has become more and more interested in competition in energy markets and especially the role of energy production and use in climate change. For an insightful – and entertaining – view of one aspect of this array of problems, see his 3 February 2014 entry "What wood smoke has taught me about fighting climate change" on the Energy Institute's Energy Economics Exchange blog (energyathaas.wordpress.com).

This article demonstrates clearly Professor Borenstein's ability to convey complex ideas in an accessible fashion, and bodes well for an informative presentation at the next Emeriti lunch.

SHORT TAKES: Emeriti Lunch Table, 2nd and 4th Thursdays monthly at noon in the northwest corner of The Great Hall in The Faculty Club. Pick up a salad or sandwich, and find the table – usually near the fireplace end of the Hall – with our reservation sign. All are welcome to join in our informal discussions!

**JANUARY LUNCH WITH SYLVIA BUNGE –
HOW WE LEARN TO REASON: BRAIN
DEVELOPMENT AND
PLASTICITY**



The speaker for the January 15th lunch meeting of the Emeriti Association was Professor Silvia Bunge of the Department of Psychology and the Helen Wills Neuroscience Institute.

It was a delight to hear from a young, articulate scholar who is

making waves in the arcane field of developmental cognitive neuroscience, both through work at her own Bunge Laboratory on Building Blocks of Cognition here at Berkeley, and on the national level. The field is providing profitable applications in fields as diverse as law, public health, and education.

Fluid reasoning, the capacity to reason with complex information and to solve novel problems, is central to how humans think. During childhood, a growing ability to reason improves learning and the solution of problems. Changes in actual brain structure and function increase reasoning development even in adolescence. Neuro-scientific studies in adults show that fluid reasoning depends on being able to consider multiple relationships among data. Professor Bunge showed the first evidence for improved reasoning

ability after intensive training, both in children and in college students.

At Dr. Bunge’s suggestion, I’m completing this minute of her talk with the traditional rhymed minutes I prepared for a very similar presentation she made a while ago at the Kosmos Club. She did me the honor of reproducing them on the website of the Bunge Lab!

When children start to reason their first attempts
set up

Direct relations linking things and facts.

Money goes into wallets - that what a wallet’s for -The reasoning is simple, on straight tracks.

But soon come novel problems less easy to sort out,
Requiring complex jumping to and fro.

Reasoning’s now more fluid, more elements in play,
And handling them comes only as brains grow.

Our large prefrontal cortex sets us apart from apes,
Exceeding theirs in growth and adult size.

As children play while under scans observers plainly see
The flow of brain blood grow before their eyes.

Links of neurons grow to thread the brain from front to
back –

The parietal cortex enters use.

The child now grows apace into a subtler reasoning
power –

Integrating words, facts, visual cues.

This network is the crucial thing in growing complex
thought

And can be strengthened as young children grow –
Leading to better reasoning, with ever changing games,
And practice, practice, practice on the go.

The brain, you see, is plastic - and malleable too -
And front to back connections can be strengthened.
Even college students who faced their law exams
Showed better scores as training sessions lengthened.

Can we foresee a time when neuroscience builds more
tools

That lead to growth and changes in the brain?

That we can grow in wisdom as well as gather facts?

Let’s hope that ethics make this path a gain!

– Phyllis Brooks Schafer



GEORGE LEITMANN AWARDED THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR

Every now and again one of our number receives an honor that brings both recognition and a high degree of ceremonial to the campus. On December 2nd friends and admirers of Professor George Leitmann of the College of Engineering gathered to witness his being awarded the French Legion of Honor. This honor, the highest that the French government can give to a non-Frenchman, recognized his services to France during WW II and the immediate postwar period. Romain Serman, the Consul General of France in San Francisco, represented President François Hollande on this grand occasion, with flags, Cal ROTC members, and students from the Paris Polytechnique, all in ceremonial uniforms.

DANGERS IN NEGLECTING OR AVOIDING IMMUNIZATION: FACTS AND MYTHS – John Swartzberg



In January a UC Berkeley student visited the Philippines. While there he was exposed to measles – not surprising as there was an ongoing outbreak of this disease there. Because he had never been vaccinated against measles, he developed the disease and exposed an enormous number of people in the Bay Area. I don't know why he had not been vaccinated, but there are too many people like him. Last summer, KQED news reported that nearly 8% of school children in Marin County have not been vaccinated for "personal belief exemptions." This "opt

out" rate is one of the highest in the state – the state-wide opt out rate is just under 3%. Also last summer, an outbreak of measles occurred at a Texas megachurch where 21 people were infected; the majority of those infected had not been vaccinated.

It's worth reflecting on what childhood immunizations have meant to our lives. From 1924 to the present, vaccines have spared some 103 million United States children disease and/or death. Polio is gone from our shores – the last cases of naturally occurring paralytic polio were in 1979, when an outbreak occurred among the Amish in several Midwestern states. We're now talking about the possibility of the worldwide elimination of polio within the next decade. The measles vaccine was introduced in the late 1960's and within five years the number of reported cases had dropped by 95%. *Haemophilus influenzae* type B epiglottitis, an infection involving the vocal cord area, was one of the most dreaded diseases seen by ER docs when I was in training in the 1970's. Children would present blue and unresponsive because they were unable to obtain sufficient air, their lives saved only by an emergency tracheostomy. A vaccine was introduced against this bacterium in 1985; today's ER docs have never seen a case. I've been an infectious diseases consultant for nearly 40 years and have seen one case of tetanus and only know what diphtheria looks like because of textbook pictures. We've had an effective vaccine against these diseases since the 1920's. The list of vaccine successes goes on and on.

But there has been a resurgence of some vaccine preventable diseases. Some parents, either out of ignorance or misinformation, postpone or skip their children's immunizations. In 2012 the United States experienced the worst whooping cough outbreak since 1959, in large part because of so many unimmunized children. Measles, all but eliminated from the United States, has made a comeback – in 2011 the number of cases nearly quadrupled from the annual average over the preceding decade. Last spring, an intentionally unvaccinated adolescent returned to New York City from London with measles, leading to the largest U.S. outbreak in nearly 20 years. More than 98% of measles in the United States were brought here by unvaccinated individuals and spread to those who were unvaccinated. "This isn't the failure of a vaccine," said CDC director Dr. Thomas Frieden. "This is the failure to vaccinate."

Adults not only fail to vaccinate their children, but themselves as well. Influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone over 6 months of age each year. To date, this has been a more severe influenza season than usual (in California already there are over 200 deaths, nearly twice as many as occurred in all of the previous year). Although the vaccine is effective against the types of influenza virus that are circulating, it's not as potent as we would like; it appears to protect around 60% of people from becoming ill. But, if everyone got it, there would be a lot fewer sick people and a lot fewer people to spread the disease to others. Pregnant women are at increased risk for severe influenza-related illness and hospitalization. That's why it is especially important for this group to be vaccinated. Last year, only 50% did. And a disturbing statistic about our hospitals: Only about 65% of all health care workers in United States get vaccinated against influenza. How would you like to be sick in the hospital and cared for by someone who is at increased risk of getting and spreading influenza?

Other adult vaccines are targeted to specific populations based on age, health conditions, occupation, travel, and other indications. On February 7th the CDC published data on vaccine coverage in adults. Only about half of those over 64 have received a tetanus/diphtheria shot in the last decade. (Protection lasts about 10 years; that's why we need boosters.) One in five adults has received the shingles vaccine. (Shingles is a miserable disease and occurs more frequently as we age.) The very effective vaccine to prevent cervical cancer (the HPV vaccine) is underutilized. Only about one-third of women who would benefit from this vaccine have received more than 1 dose of the vaccine. (Three doses are recommended.) The pneumococcal vaccine helps prevent the most common bacterial cause of pneumonia and its complications. It is recommended for all adults over 64, but only about 60% of candidates have taken advantage of it.

Why, with vaccines being one of the greatest tools available for preventing death and misery, do so many shun them? Even if we don't care about protecting ourselves, why do many parents deprive their children of protection? Are we so self-centered that we're blind to the idea that prevention of disease in one individual means that the disease will not be spread to others, a concept known as herd immunity?

There's no one answer to these questions. Charlatans and fear-mongers have always been with us but can now use the internet to reach a much wider audience. For example, the notion that vaccines cause autism is perpetuated over the internet even though more than a dozen excellent studies have debunked this idea. Science illiteracy and anti-science movements (even in some public schools) deserve some of the blame. Public health professionals and doctors could be much more proactive in exposing myths about vaccines and promoting their benefits.

Ironically, probably the biggest reason people don't get vaccinated is that they rarely see the diseases that vaccines now prevent. Success has bred complacency. I remember standing with my parents in a very long line in front of my local school in the 1950's awaiting the sugar cubes containing the polio vaccine. Polio affected or was witnessed by nearly every family and I doubt there were many parents who denied their children this vaccine. We surely don't want to go back to those days to prove to ourselves the value of vaccines.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings fellow retirees,

We all wish our colleagues a warm spring after a brutal winter in the country's midsection, eastern seaboard, and Deep South. And we all wish that we Californians could get a good solid rainstorm every 3 days or so from now until May. We shall have to see what Mother Nature and the errant jet stream provide.

Our March lunch meeting is particularly germane as we ponder weather patterns, and I encourage you to join us to hear Severin Borenstein on March 15th as he speaks on aspects of this topic. Be sure to send your RSVP lunch form to the Faculty Club by fax or snail mail! The Club assures me that updating their reservation system online is part of the overall Club's remodeling and upgrading their communication system, so stay tuned for that.

We continue to pay attention to and write letters about the health insurance issues that members have brought to our attention. The Retirement Action Service Center (RASC) at the Office of the President is very receptive to

comments and very helpful in giving advice about this issue, especially to retirees who live outside California. As we have said before, that which is happening for this group is a likely precursor to what we will see for those of us continuing to live in California. Your Association is paying close attention and letting the Office of the President know your concerns in collaboration with all the other retirement associations in the UC System, both emeriti and staff.

We have recently set up a Department Emeriti Representative group that will provide an information conduit between departments and the UC Berkeley Emeriti Association. (See the list below.) The first meeting with those representatives able to attend was very productive and has set the stage for a broader information transfer across departments on campus. Creating a “retirement friendly” environment is the goal, and that requires a sharing of information among departmental administrators, those planning retirement, those in the transition to retirement, and those in retirement. We have much to share with the campus’ department and central administration. Your input is valued, either through your department representatives or directly to the Emeriti Association. The Department Emeriti Representatives can be found on the Retirement Center WEB Site under the UCBEA link, and these representatives will be updated frequently.

In the meantime, enjoy the arrival of spring and keep hoping for those March and April showers that will bring May flowers.

Best,

Caroline M. Kane, President

DEPARTMENT EMERITI REPRESENTATIVES – as of 2-7-14

As President Kane has explained above, a certain number of departments have appointed emeriti representatives to ensure that information of concern to retirees or faculty considering retirement reaches the appropriate administrative personnel within each department. See the current list below. If your department is not listed, maybe you could volunteer to serve in this position or suggest a possible representative?

Optometry: Kenneth Polse, polse@berkeley.edu
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RETIREMENT CENTER UPDATE

An Aging America – Challenges and Opportunities Biennial Retiree Conference, May 15, 2014

Jennifer Granholm, UC Berkeley Distinguished Practitioner of Law and Public Policy and Michigan’s 47th governor from 2003 to 2011, will keynote the conference. The 2014 Alumna of the Year, she will be co-chairing the Priorities Action USA political action committee raising money for Hillary Rodham Clinton. Her keynote address is *Cracking the Code: Creating Good Jobs in America in a Global Economy*. “Are we in a ‘new normal’ of higher unemployment and widening income gaps? How do we age well and have an aging America be a better place for our children and grandchildren?”

Workshops and Exhibitors: Conference workshops will address creativity, memory, caregiving, housing, technology, and sex. The conference will also feature an exhibit hall.

Registration: Registration fee of \$35 includes continental breakfast, lunch, program materials, and parking. Registration is now open and closes Thursday, May 8. Contact the Center at 510-642-5461 or ucbrc@berkeley.edu.

Changing Medical Plans after Open Enrollment

Are you enrolled in the wrong plan? Changes can be made but *action must be taken by March 31, 2014*. Call

the UCOP Retirement Administration Service Center (RASC) at 800-888-8267.

Next Retirement Center Director

Associate Vice Provost Angie Stacy will lead the search committee for the next director. Share your thoughts about the Center's future with Angie at retireeideas@berkeley.edu.

UC Berkeley Financial Fair

Thursday, April 10, 10am – 2pm, Alumni House

Attend workshops and visit with campus financial vendors. No registration is required. Visit <http://uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/financialfair.shtml>.

Volunteers needed! Help out by answering questions and assisting with workshop presentations. Call Wendy Nishikawa at (510) 642-7883

Learning in Retirement Course

All LIR Courses are free to retirees and their guests. Simply register for this series by e-mailing the Center at <http://ucbrc.berkeley.edu> or by phoning 510-642-5461. You will be informed of the location for the sessions once registration is completed.

Religious Uniformity and Diversity in the Ancient and Medieval Mediterranean

Thursday, April 17, 2-4 pm “The Biblical Struggle Toward Monotheism” Robert Alter, Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Comparative Literature

Tuesday, April 22, 2-4 pm “Religious Pluralism in the Roman Empire: Did Judaism Test the Limits of Roman Tolerance?” Erich Gruen, Professor Emeritus of History and Classics

Tuesday, April 29, 2-4 pm “Islam in the Mediterranean: Empires, Religion, Communities, Identities” Ira Lapidus, Professor Emeritus of History and Islamic Studies

Tuesday, May 6, 2-4 pm “Paganism, Christianity and Eastern Orthodoxy, 4th-15th Centuries” Maria Mavroudi, Professor of Classical & Byzantine History



Be well!

Patrick C. Cullinane, Director

EMERITI TIMES: Published before each meeting of the UC Berkeley Emeriti Association to give members information about meetings, Board actions, and pertinent campus news and policies, along with interviews and items of general interest. In this way we reach out to members unable to attend the meetings. Editor-writer: Phyllis Brooks Schafer.

UC BERKELEY EMERITI ASSOCIATION 2013-2014

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UC Berkeley Emeriti Association Luncheon

Saturday, March 15th, 2014

Social Hour at 11:00 a.m. – Lunch at noon – Speaker at 1:00 p.m.

The Faculty Club

Severin Borenstein

Professor of Business Administration

Exciting Progress and Harsh Realities in the Race to Low-Carbon Energy

To guarantee your main course choice, your reservation must be received seven days prior to the event. All lunch options are \$18. Payment may be made by faxing this form to 510/540-6204 [indicate Faculty Club Account # _____ to charge], or by mailing this form [with a check made payable to The Faculty Club] to the UCB Emeriti Association, The Faculty Club #6050, Berkeley, CA 94720-6050. For more information, call the Faculty Club at 510/540-5678x2-224.

Main course menu items: Salad: Mixed salad with blackened tilapia; Hot Entrée: Moroccan Chicken; Pasta: Cheese manicotti with mushrooms

Please note: Unless a cancellation is received by seven days before the event, there will be no refunds to no-shows.

<i>Please fill in attendee(s):</i>	<i>Please indicate a preferred main course for each registrant:</i>
Member Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta
Spouse/Partner/Guest Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta
Guest Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta